

NEWSLETTER No 2: Winter 2001-2

LHS on the move (again!)

When, in Newsletter No 1, we announced the move of the Society's regular meeting place to SFX, we had high hopes that we would be able to be there for some long while, but, because of the developing needs of "Hope at Everton", that was not to be. Although our stay there was for only three meetings, we would like to thank the Hope team for the warm welcome that they gave us, and wish them well for the future.

A suitable alternative has been found in the former Liverpool Institute (now LIPA), Mount St, Liverpool, and Committee Member Marie **McQuade** here tells us something of the history of this famous building:

In 1825, a public meeting in Bold St. attended by over 1000 mechanics and 300 influential gentlemen saw the establishment of the 'Liverpool Mechanics' School of Arts'. The initial aim was to provide educational opportunities, via evening classes and lectures, for boys whose working life started at the age of 14. To this end, the Directors also planned a library, a museum of machines and an experimental workshop, and for an annual fee, members and their sons could use these facilities. From the outset, wives were encouraged to become members in their own right, and daughters could attend lectures. In 1844, the offer of Blackburne House by Mr. George Holt, for a moderate rental, enabled the Directors to fulfil their ambition of founding a separate school for girls.

The School of Arts' name was revised to 'Liverpool Mechanics Institute' in 1832, although classes in various aspects of practical design and ornamental painting were still taught. In 1840, 1842 and 1844 the Directors took advantage of the craze for exhibitions, then sweeping Europe, to help pay for their new sculpture gallery. Along with the usual anatomical and mechanical exhibits, there was a model of Niagara Falls, a working diving bell and a 90ft. 'frozen lake'.

In 1835 Lord Brougham laid the foundation stone of the new building on Mount St. The original scheme had already been enlarged to include day schools, but the administration of the numerous departments remained separate until 1856, when the name became 'The Liverpool Institute'. The year before had had only 70 boys enrolled and closure was considered, but from this low point the High School prospered, and academic standards were high, until, in the 1860's, the annual reports claimed that only one other English school had as many candidates passing the Oxford Junior Exams.

From 1857-1881 the Institute experimented with a new department, Queen's College. Affiliation to the University of London made it possible for all students, not just Anglicans, to continue their studies to university standard. Although not a resounding success, with only 8 or 9 students obtaining degrees, the attempt reflected the non-sectarian policy of the founders of the 'Institute'.

In 1904 the City Council assumed responsibility for the Boys' High School, which became a grammar school and so remained until its closure in 1985. This was expected to mean the end of over 150 years of educational provision on the site, but thanks to the efforts of old boy Sir Paul McCartney, the City Council and the Schools for Performing Arts Trust, the building was reprieved, restored and expanded, and in 1996, its doors were re-opened as the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts (LIPA).

'NOT FOR OURSELVES ALONE, BUT FOR THE WHOLE WORLD WERE WE BORN'

was the motto of the old Institute, but it seems very appropriate for the aspirations of LIPA students.

Programme to June 2002

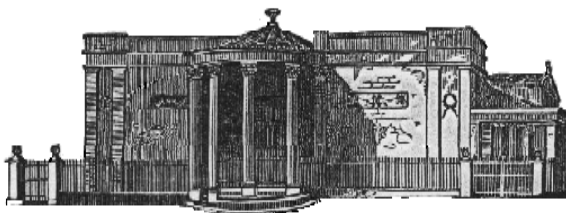
Except where otherwise stated, all meetings are at LIPA, starting at 1.30 for 2.00p.m.

20th January: **The History of the Wellington Rooms**

Speaker : **Tom Walsh** (Postponed from 21st October 2001)

The Wellington Rooms, standing at the corner of Mount Pleasant and Orford Street, were opened in 1816 to provide a worthy setting for the dance-loving Liverpool merchant princes, their friends and their families.

With its architecture, and gracious interior designs, the building quickly became the centre of fashionable Liverpool life and the conditions of membership made it the area's most exclusive cultural centre, and the envy of neighbouring towns.



*From "The Stranger in Liverpool", 7th edition
H942.7212 SIL (LRO)*

The story of the Rooms, from their 19th century heyday to their closure and abandonment in the 20th, encapsulates much of Liverpool's social and cultural history. Now in a sorry state, derelict, scaffolded and with more than a fair share of tatty fly-posters desecrating the walls and gracious Grecian columns, only listed status saves the Rooms from demolition.

Tom Walsh has not only researched the history of the building, but chaired the committee which, in the 1960's, acquired the Rooms for use as Liverpool's Irish Centre, which he managed for over 30 years.

24th February: **The Stanleys in the 16th century**

Speaker: **Janet Hollinshead**, (Liverpool Hope University College.)



*The Stanley Crest
from
Fairbairn's
Book of Crests H929.8
FAI, (LRO)*

In 1495, Henry VII created Thomas Stanley 1st Earl of Derby as a reward for his part in the Battle of Bosworth ten years before. Stanley had delayed joining the fray until its outcome looked fairly certain and had then entered the fight on the winning Lancastrian side, supporting Henry Tudor in defeating the Yorkist King Richard III.

Through such resourcefulness, the Earls of Derby remained politically powerful. During the 16th century, they first supported Henry VIII against the Catholic rising, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace and subsequently so gained the approval of his daughter, the Catholic Mary, that on her accession to the throne, it was a Stanley who was appointed High Steward of England.

17th March: **"Ancient Laws & Laudable Customs" Liverpool & its government in the 17th century**

Speaker: **Michael Power**, (Liverpool University)

One way to discover more about 17th century Liverpool is to consult the Town Books of the period. They contain not only minutes of the meetings held to govern the town, but also information about the elections of the mayor, council & bailiffs, and the records of the Portmoot Courts. These last provide an interesting insight into the enforcement of the local laws.



*Liverpool Town Hall & Exchange, ca 1674
from "Merseyside to Windermere", Pearce,
H942.721 PEA, (LRO)*

The Town Books of 1649-1671, edited by Michael Power, can now be obtained in hardback.

Programme until June 2002, continued

Except where otherwise stated, all meetings are at LIPA, starting at 1.30 for 2.00p.m.

21st April: Sugar Refining in Liverpool, 1660-1800
Speaker: Mona Duggan



*Richard Gildart
 Sugar Boiler &
 Mayor*

Dr. Mona Duggan, an LHS Member who regularly attends our meetings, has this to say about her talk:

“This lecture was inspired by the fact that, when I was researching the history of Ormskirk, I found there was sugar refining in that town in 1680. I knew that cane was planted in Barbados for the first time in 1640, but for refining to have reached Ormskirk in forty years seemed remarkable. If it had reached Ormskirk, what about Liverpool? When did the “mystery” and the skill of sugar boiling reach Liverpool? Who brought it? Where were the refineries?”

To understand what was involved I needed to know more about the history of the cultivation and processing of sugar in the West Indies. In this lecture, I hope to give you an account of my subsequent research. .”

Illustration adapted from Geo. Chandler's 'Liverpool', Batsford, 1957.

26th May 1st Annual General Meeting (please see overleaf)
(1.15 p.m.) followed, at 2.00p.m., by
Liverpool & the British Civil Wars, 1642-51
Speaker: Malcolm Gratton

Like much of the rest of England, Liverpool did not escape the effects of the Civil War, and during this time, it was controlled by both Parliamentarians and Royalists. Perhaps, one of the most remembered Royalists was Prince Rupert, who before he captured Liverpool in 1644, encamped on Beacon Hill, Everton, from where he had an excellent view of the town. Our illustration shows the cottage, long since demolished, in which the Prince is traditionally believed to have had his headquarters.

He was obviously not impressed with Liverpool and its defences as he is said to have commented that it was

“A mere crow`s nest which a parcel of boys might take”.



*From "The Stranger in Liverpool", 7th edition
 H942. 7212 STR, (LRO)*

23rd June

It is regretted that arrangements for this month's meeting are not yet finalised.

Full details will be published as soon as possible.

LHS would like to thank **Liverpool Record Office** for the use of illustrations from their books & records.

Annual General Meeting, 26 May 2002

You will have noticed from the previous page that the Society’s first AGM, starting at 1.15 p.m, will precede Malcolm Gratton’s talk. Please make every effort to be there, as this is your opportunity say how the Society should be run. A formal Notice of Meeting will be issued nearer the time, but please remember that, to vote at the AGM, your **2002/3 Subscription Renewal**, which falls due for payment on 1 April, must have been received by the Membership Secretary.

Joint Membership

Subject to ratification at the AGM, it has been decided to introduce a further category of membership to allow any two members living together at the same address to join as Joint Members, at an Annual Subscription of £15.00. Joint members will both be entitled to vote at business meetings, but will receive only one copy of any Society publications. Those who paid a double subscription of £20.00 in 2001-2 may, if they so wish, claim a credit of £5.00 towards their 2002-3 subscription.

LHS Journal

The Publications Committee is well advanced in planning the issue, next June, of the Society’s first Journal. As well as being distributed, free of charge, to all members, it should also be on limited sale to the public.

A number of articles have already been received or promised, and approaches are being made to others who have expressed a willingness to help. If any member would like to contribute a piece of their own work, which they think would be of interest to the Society as a whole, they are invited to contact the Journal’s Editor, Neville King, by e-mail (nevilleking@tinyworld.co.uk) or, by post, care of the Administration Secretary.

“The Quiet One” As we go to press, we are saddened to learn of the untimely death, at the age of 58, of the former Beatle,

George Harrison.

Even if forty or so years ago we were, like the present writer, too “square” to allow ourselves to enjoy the sound that he and his fellow musicians were making, its very familiarity and the nostalgia it creates have caused us to re-evaluate it, and finally realising just what we had been missing, we now greatly enjoy both it and George’s many “post-Beatle” works.

There can be few of us who do not appreciate, as well as his music, his huge contribution to the fame and prosperity of our great City, and to one of the makers of Liverpool’s recent history, our Society pays tribute and says a fond “Farewell”.



1943-2001

The Society’s Officers & Committee, 2001-2

Officers:	Chairman:	Frank Boyce	Administration Secretary:	Jo McCann (P)
	Treasurer:	Joyce Culling	Membership Secretary:	Michael Brian (P)
Committee (Elected)	Charles Collier	Kathy Donaldson	Brenda Downey (P)	Brenda Murray
Committee (Co-opted)	Peter Jones (P)	Neville King (P)	Marie McQuade (P)	

(P) denotes also member of Publications Sub-Committee

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